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# Advocate of Peace.

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## The People Want Peace Assured.

The members of the United States Senate have been greatly impressed, and we suspect not a little surprised, by the volume of public sentiment in favor of the ratification of the pending arbitration treaties which has been pouring in upon them in letters and petitions from all sections of the country. Some senators, who think the treaties in themselves "lame and impotent," have, nevertheless, been led by this extraordinary exhibition of public opinion to declare themselves in favor of ratification. And that is most commendable in the senators. If there is, as Senator Works, of California, said, in his speech of February 8, "a general, almost universal desire that the world should be at peace," then a very imperfect treaty may prove in practice to be just about as effective as a more perfect one would be. The best possible treaty that could be devised would prove to be a

"broken reed" in time of crisis, if the general sentiment of the country cared not whether peace or war prevailed. This aspect of the matter has had, we think, all too little attention in the Senate. Nearly all the discussion there has been on the technical character of the treaties, their constitutionality, their defects, etc., and not on their significance as the strong, united will of the nation in favor of undisturbed peace.

Some members of the Senate have taken upon themselves to make mild sport of the people who have sent in petitions, as for the most part not knowing the contents of the treaties or, if knowing, as "not understanding their meaning and effect." We fear that these senators are doing the people a good deal of injustice. No other measure of public interest has been up for consideration in recent years with which the people have taken so much pains to acquaint themselves as with these treaties. The text of the treaties has been extensively distributed among the people and widely read, and, as for understanding them, we are not sure but that the people have done quite as well as the senators. At any rate, more meanings of the documents could not well be conjured up anywhere else than have been imagined by the senators themselves. The men and women of the nation who have sent letters and memorials to Washington favoring the ratification of the treaties, are nearly all from the intelligent classes. They have doubtless not troubled themselves as much as the senators have done to find recondite meanings and dangerous tendencies in the documents; but of one thing they have been sure, and that is that the treaties, whatever defects they may have, will constitute a strong bulwark against war and an assurance of the continuance of unbroken peace between the nations who are parties to them. In their view, this is the chief significance of the treaties, and it is from this point of view that they have nearly unanimously urged their ratification.

The voting on the treaties is to begin on the fifth of this month. The proposed amendments to the text will first be disposed of, and then the resolution of ratification with the suggested amendments thereto will be taken up. All this will require some days. It is generally believed at this writing that the necessary two-thirds of the senators favor the treaties and that they are sure to be approved. It is also understood that the senators in general favor the adoption of the Lodge amendment to the resolution of ratification, which is merely an expression, in formal terms, of what the State Department declares to be the true interpretation of the treaties,